

HALL OF RECORDS  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

# Nineteenth Annual Report

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MARYLAND STATE BOARD

OF

MOTION PICTURE CENSORS



1934-1935

OFFICES

211 NORTH CALVERT STREET

BALTIMORE - MARYLAND

Nineteenth Annual Report

MARYLAND STATE BOARD

OF

MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

1934-1935

BEN PAUL SANDY, D. D. S.  
Chairman

ASA C. SHARP  
Vice-Chairman and Treasurer

MARIE WHITE PRESSTMAN  
Secretary

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HELEN L. ODOM  
Chief Clerk

OFFICES

211 NORTH CALVERT STREET  
BALTIMORE - MARYLAND

HON. HARRY W. NICE,  
*Governor of Maryland,*  
Annapolis, Maryland.

DEAR GOVERNOR NICE:

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 66A of the Annotated Code of Maryland, title: "Moving Pictures," this report covers the work of the Maryland State Board of Censors for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 1934, and ending September 30, 1935.

#### GENERAL STATEMENT

The Board has examined during this period 2,159 original films and 8,186 duplicate films. Of a total of 10,345 pictures submitted, 10,025 were approved, five were rejected in toto, one of which was later passed in reconstructed form, and deletions were ordered in 315 on statutory grounds.

A total of 28,363,459 feet of film passed through the office as compared with 26,474,301 feet examined during the previous year.

Practically the entire output of domestic films are "talkies," or sound films. Foreign films, which show a marked increase in number, are likewise almost exclusively sound or talking pictures, carrying captions in English.

#### OPERATIONS OF THE BOARD

Some idea of the extent of the work of this commission may be gained from the fact that the three members of the Board viewed 5,713,506 feet of original film, besides constantly re-screening and checking films from written dialogues submitted with the applications. Scripts containing translations of all foreign talking pictures are read by the censors.

The Board frequently confers with the producers, offering suggestions for the reconstruction of films. Six paid inspectors are regularly employed by the Board for the purpose of checking up on the exhibition of films throughout the State and in enforcing the law generally. The Board employs volun-

teer inspectors in many of the counties. Of the 183 theatres in the State, 87 are located in Baltimore City.

During the year the Board reviewed 32 films on appeal. Only one appeal from the action of this commission was taken to court. In this case the ruling of the Board was sustained.

The statutory reasons for deletions ordered are classified as follows:

Indecent .....	182
Immoral and tending to corrupt morals.....	143
Inhuman.....	14
Inciting to crime.....	59
Salacious.....	15

Of 2,952 films classified as drama, 272 were subject to deletions. This classification consists almost entirely of feature films of five reels or more. Under the classification of comedy, 28 films, out of 2,482, were found to be objectionable in part. This classification consists chiefly of short subjects of approximately two reels. Newsreels, of which 3,640 were submitted, were deleted in only four instances. Eleven cartoons, out of a total of 692 examined, were subject to eliminations.

The Board of Censors has not been vested with control over vaudeville in motion picture theatres. The Board; however, has cooperated with the police authorities in suppressing such entertainment as is considered subversive to morals.

The Board keeps a careful check on subversive propaganda employed by theatres under its jurisdiction. All advertising matter is inspected, and literature on sale checked, and, if objectionable, handed over to the police.

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The itemized statement appended to this report shows that the receipts from fees and the sale of substitute seals amounted to \$39,463.00, as compared with \$36,563.00 for the preceding year. The operating expenses of the Board for the fiscal year were \$27,577.76, as compared with \$27,174.49 for the preceding year. The net revenue to the State from the Board, after defraying all expenses, was therefore \$11,885.24.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board has recommended in the past, and continues to recommend, that the law be amended so as to enable the censors

to designate such films as are unsuitable for children. In the opinion of the Board, there are many films which are improper and even harmful to children which the Board, under the present law, cannot reject, but which might well be restricted to adult audiences.

The Board needs the assistance of a properly trained reviewer in the projection room. The work of reviewing films has for some time past become too arduous for the three members of the commission, who must likewise sit as a Board of Appeals from their original decisions.

A statistical summary of the activities of the Board is attached to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

BEN PAUL SANDY, D. D. S., *Chairman*

ASA C. SHARP, *Vice-Chairman*

MARIE W. PRESSTMAN, *Secretary*

December 31, 1935

# MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS

For the Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 1935

## RECEIPTS

### FEES:

Original Reels (5,713,506 feet).....	\$12,808.00	
Duplicate Reels (22,649,953 feet).....	25,031.00	
Sale of Substitute Seals (1624).....	1,624.00	
		<u>\$39,463.00</u>

### TOTAL RECEIPTS:

Remitted to State Treasury.....	<u>\$39,463.00</u>
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## EXPENSES

Salaries and Wages.....	\$21,936.18	
Office Supplies and Stationery.....	290.03	
Printing.....	226.62	
Film Approval Seals.....	1,229.91	
Motion Picture Machine Supplies.....	60.21	
Office Repairs and Replacements.....	30.75	
Light, Heat and Power.....	229.97	
Traveling.....	566.34	
Communication.....	342.88	
Insurance.....	60.00	
Office Equipment.....	224.87	
Motion Picture Equipment.....	100.00	
Rent.....	2,280.00	
		<u>\$27,577.76</u>

**MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS**  
**For the Fiscal Year Ended September 30, 1935**

**BUDGET ACCOUNT (PER COMPTROLLER)**

Appropriation, 1935.....	\$27,917.52	
Refunds to Credit of Budget.....	35.85	
	<hr/>	\$27,953.37
Less—Disbursements by the State Treasury for Expenses.....		27,577.76
Unexpended Balance, September 30, 1935, reverted to State Treasury		<u><u>\$375.61</u></u>

**WORKING FUND**

Total Working Fund on Deposit, Union Trust Company, September 30, 1935.....	<u><u>\$400.00</u></u>
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**MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF MOTION PICTURE CENSORS**  
**REPORT OF FILMS EXAMINED**

October 1, 1934—September 30, 1935

	Films Original	Films Duplicate	Reels Original	Reels Duplicate	No. of Feet Original	No. of Feet Duplicate	Films Approved	Films Rejected	Films Eliminated
October . . .	185	676	586	2,108	506,408	1,882,124	843	1	17
November . .	189	627	642	2,000	539,403	1,703,167	785	0	31
December . .	190	683	688	2,436	514,710	2,089,095	845	1	27
January . . .	178	687	636	2,252	468,247	1,948,180	846	0	19
February . .	163	641	489	1,942	414,566	1,677,694	799	0	5
March . . . .	187	685	594	2,246	505,618	1,905,693	851	0	21
April . . . . .	165	683	498	2,231	419,259	1,915,578	835	1	12
May . . . . .	193	706	561	2,128	477,925	1,799,971	876	1	22
June . . . . .	168	658	569	2,106	400,244	1,779,379	771	0	55
July . . . . .	165	640	521	2,111	440,372	1,805,057	785	0	20
August . . . .	200	778	614	2,491	516,580	2,097,406	937	0	41
September . .	176	722	605	2,385	510,174	2,046,609	852	1	45
	2,159	8,186	7,003	26,436	5,713,506	22,649,953	10,025	*5	315

\*One later passed in reconstructed form.

**SUMMARY OF REPORT**

Films, Original . . . . .	2,159			
Films, Duplicate . . . . .	8,186			
Reels . . . . .		7,003		
Reels, Duplicate . . . . .		26,436		
Number of Feet, Original . . . . .			5,713,506	
Number of Feet, Duplicate . . . . .			22,649,953	
Films Approved . . . . .				10,025
Films Rejected . . . . .				5
Films Eliminated . . . . .				315
	10,345	33,439	28,363,459	10,345

**CLASSIFICATION OF FILMS**  
October 1, 1934—September 30, 1935

	Dramas	Comedies	News	Cartoons	Advertising	Miscellaneous
October.....	235	217	303	52	4	50
November.....	239	169	296	78	3	31
December.....	280	187	304	44	4	54
January.....	241	212	303	53	2	54
February.....	208	210	276	46	4	60
March.....	258	208	292	48	5	61
April.....	245	185	300	71	4	43
May.....	238	224	305	89	3	40
June.....	220	196	310	64	10	26
July.....	238	177	302	51	5	32
August.....	288	244	335	55	8	48
September.....	262	253	314	41	1	27
	2,952	2,482	3,640	692	53	526

**ELIMINATIONS**  
October 1, 1934—September 30, 1935

	Dramas Eliminated	Comedies Eliminated	News Reels Eliminated	Cartoons Eliminated
October.....	17	0	0	0
November.....	21	10	0	0
December.....	20	7	0	0
January.....	15	4	0	0
February.....	5	0	0	0
March.....	21	0	0	0
April.....	12	0	0	0
May.....	19	0	3	0
June.....	44	0	1	10
July.....	20	0	0	0
August.....	38	3	0	0
September.....	40	4	0	1
	272	28	4	11